A

COMMENT

ON THE

TIMES;

OR, A

CHARACTER

OF

The Enemies of the

CHURCH.

Written by *Thomas Wall*, Mr. in Arts, and Minister of Jesus Christ.

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To His

Most Dear Brother,

Mr. S. VV.

TO entitle a Book to the name of a Brother, is neither unusual or undecent; the Primitive Fathers more frequently, in all Ages some, no less eminent for Piety then Learning, have done it;

and it is good to take example from thoſe who are capable to give it.

As well to relieve my own affections, as to acknowledge your kindneſs, I Dedicate this to you : I ſhould have been as little ſatisfied in my ſelf, as ſhown my ſelf thankful to you, had I made any other choice.

'Tis your acceptance that I crave, and not protection, becauſe it is a diſh not agreeable to all Palats : In

Book-

Book-feasts, men hate those that feed on that which themselves love not. While I would hereby give you a testimony of my thankfulness, I would not have it prejudicial to its Parent: I hope the Author you may own, though not the Subject. Much of my support have I received from you, and (to speak in my second Religion, gratitude) though I should pay all I have, I should have all to pay: Tis yet my comfort, as God hath

hath made you a means of doing good to me, so he hath he made me an instrument to embalm your name. To which I will add one grain more, my Prayers: Beseeching God to bless you with the same blessings which I beg for the pardon of

Your most affectionate Brother,

Thomas Wall.

To

To the Reader.

Reader,

IF thou art a part of the Subject of this Diſcourſe, thy reduction into the Boſom of the Church is my aim therein; and ſurely my deſires thereunto are very ſtrong, but can lend no help to my endeavors. Arguments can never prevail, where we are reſolved to perſiſt. Many men (even with diſadvantage)

tage) fight with death, because they think they are never truly conquered, who had rather die, then be so; and so make a fooliſh Bargain with the world, exchanging their lives for reputation. And ſo many perſiſt in deſtructive errours, ſillily thinking they are never overcome, while themſelves do not acknowledge it, and loſe the Truth, to ſave credit: Where then juſt arguments cannot convince, there is no hopes to reclaim. He, to whom man

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never ſpake the like, ſpake yet to no purpoſe to ſuch men, but yet he ſpake: So holy a preſident ſecures my attempt: If thou therefore wilt not permit me to benefit thy ſoul, at leaſt give me leave to diſcharge my own. But if thou art a Reader, who haſt as well courage to own the truth, as knowledge to diſcern it, let not thy affections to read, out-run thy judgement in the reading, fully to obſerve the dependence of every ſentence with the former,

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may haply require more then perfunctory perusal; the want of a more severe observance may be injurious to thy self, as well as to me, it may be a loss to both. I have subscribed my name hereunto, not that I suppose so mean a piece can gain any reputation to my name, or my name to it, but that my holy Mother may take notice she hath one Son the more, who hath a greater zeal to serve her, then ability; who had rather discover his weakness, then neglect

neglect his duty. If any desire to have a further account of me, I am content to give them this convenient notice, That as there is no tittle in this Treatise either directed or intended against this present Government, *so do I profess my self willing to yeild all submissive obedience to it. Among other Arguments wherewith I have satisfied my Conscience for so doing, this is one,* For that I do believe it was by a special Divine providence raised up,

to

to give a ſtop to the violent and unrighteous actions of theſe men, who now by an argument taken out of their own mouths, muſt be forced to confeſs, That either the deſigne at which they drove, was wicked, or themſelves wicked in the managing of it. *In what I have writ, it is little to me to be judged by men, it is God that judgeth the heart. I expect not ſucceſs herein from popular noiſes, but the ſecret bleſſing of the ſame righte-*

To the Reader.

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ous God, who knows the integrity of a heart inflam'd with zeal to his glory, and the Churches peace: And if I reclaim none that are fallen, I have my hire, if I can but confirm them that ſtand.

Farewel.

To the Reader.

Pſalm 68. 30.

Rebuke, O Lord, the company of the Spear-men (or the beaſt of the reeds) the multitude of the Bulls, with the Calves of the people; till they ſubmit themſelves with pieces of ſilver; ſcatter the men that delight in war.

LEt God ariſe, *and let his enemies be ſcattered*; ſo begins this Pſalm, and it ſhall be the ſubject of my diſcourſe.

When the enemies of God riſe up againſt his Church, it is time for the Church to fall down to God, to implore his aid againſt thoſe enemies. Holy *Prayers* are more powerful then profane *Swords*: It is not ſo much the arm that imploys them, as the cauſe againſt which they are employed, that

makes the ſwords profane. The vigour of faith in humble devotions, hath a greater prevalency, then the valour of the arm in an abuſed inſtrument of cruelty.

Samuel wrought no leſs deliverance for Iſrael, then *Gideon* or *Sampſon*; and yet I never find him in the head of their Troops, The people fought, but it was he obtained the victory. In vain is that Religion, whoſe Patron cannot ſhield its Profeſſors: In vain are any attempts againſt it, if he can. It is good ſeeking help from an all-powerful hand. If the Bulls roar for rage againſt the Church, it is time for the Lambs to bleat out for reſcue. *Rebuke, O Lord, the company*, &c.

A ſecret ordination ſummons all things to the end of their being, the glory of God. The very malice of his enemies ſhall ſet forth the tryumph of his mercy and power, in the preſervation of his Church. *It may be*

be ſtrongly oppoſed, but not wholly ruin'd.

What can the Church do againſt ſo many adverſaries, and ſo violent? The leſs help it finds on earth, the more it ſeeks from heaven. The more violent are her adverſaries, the more earneſt are her prayers. *Rebuke, O Lord, the company,* &c.

The words contain, Firſt, A Declaration of God's enemies. Secondly, An Imprecation againſt thoſe enemies.

The enemies are marſhalled into four ranks.

1. A company of Spear-men, or (as ſome Tranſlations read it) the Beaſt of the reeds.
2. The multitude of the Bulls.
3. The calves of the people.
4. The men that delight in war.

The Imprecation is alſo two-fold; The firſt more gentle; it is but *Rebuke the Spear-men*; and that with a limi-

tation too; *till they ſubmit themſelves with pieces of ſilver.*

For they that will not, but delight in war, more ſeverely deal with ſuch, *Scatter them*; *Scatter the men that delight in war.*

Before I enter upon the deſcription of theſe enemies of the Church, according to their ſeveral ranks, obſerve firſt from the general ſcope of the Text,

That the Church of God never wanted enemies, never will. *There is no peace to the wicked*, ſaith God: There ſhall be no peace to the godly, ſay the wicked. The wicked ſhall have no peace which God can give; the godly ſhall have no peace which the wicked can take away.

God is the Lord of all the earth, it is fit that all parts of the earth ſhould yeild him ſome tribute of ſouls. There may be ſeven thouſand and one in one part of the earth; but alas, what is

ſeven

ſeven thouſand and one in one part, to ſcarce one of ſeven thouſand in all the other parts: Sure I am, God's flock is but a little one; all the reſt are enemies. Whoever are the enemies, great is their enmity; and proportionable thereunto, their cruelty.

Whoever are the enemies: for there are enemies without the pale of the Church, and there are ſome within. Some without. There are, that hate the Church, the ſeed of the Serpent, their father's own brood: *Ye are of your father the divel*, ſaith our Saviour Chriſt. There are, that mock it; an Iſhmaelitiſh iſſue: There are, that deride, *Sanballets* progeny. There are, that rail at it, *Rabſhekah*'s race. There are, that curſe it, *Balaams* brood; All ſeek to deſtroy it.

There is no agreement between good and evil: Neither of which can ſubſiſt in any part of the other: Meet they may, but not unite: There is no-

thing good which is not wholly ſo. The leaſt defect changeth the title. Thus ſtands it alſo between truth and falſhood: Truth is but one, it hath no ſubſiſtence but in it ſelf, admits of no agreement with what is not one with it. Look then what difference there is in the nature of the things which are entertained; ſuch difference there is in the affections of thoſe that do profeſs them.

Religion is the ſureſt tye of love: where this knits not the hearts, there can be no perfect Union. A ſeeming truce there may be, but no true c n-cord. It is their Religion (true or falſe) which all Nations of the world believe themſelves moſt engaged, both to defend and propagate. When this comes into competition, that ſpurious concord which is knit by ſecular reſpects, like ſome goodly Fabrick founded upon the ſands, is ſuddenly overthrown with every puff of paſſi-

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on or miſpriſion. Enmity grounded on difference of Religion; may be lull'd aſleep by ſome ſecular intereſts, but cannot be extinguiſhed: If the cradle be not continually rocked, it quickly wakes; like a fire which hath ſome while lay ſmothering under the pile, breaks forth ere long more violently into a ſudden flame.

If diſagreement in matters of faith cauſeth enmity, the more contrary one faith is to another, the greater is that enmity. The world hath embraced three, and but three ſeveral Religions; the Jewiſh, Chriſtian, and Mahumetan. The Jews expect their Meſſiah yet to come, who with great ſtate and glory, ſhall ſubdue all Nations to his Scepter, and reigne glorioufly with them upon the earth.

The Mahumetans have their Saviour already come; and ſhall come again, and receive them into a paradice above, to all fleſhly delights: Wine,

and Women, Muſick, Banquettings, and all things that delight a ſenſual and brutiſh appetite.

Neither of theſe are ſo contrary the one to the other, as the Chriſtian is to both; teaching againſt the one, that the Saviour of the world is already come; whoſe Palace was a Stable, and his Couch a Manger; whoſe Crown was Thorns, and his Scepter a Croſs; whoſe Revenews was poverty, and his State humility; whoſe Sword was his Word, and his conqueſt Dying. In a word, whoſe Kingdom was not of this world.

Teaching againſt the other, nothing but ſpiritual joys, and incomprehenſible conſolations in the glorious viſion and fruition of God.

Go to now, O thou Chriſtian, go to the Jews firſt, and tell them, You are a faithleſs Nation; your Meſſiah is come, and ye have rejected him, and with cruel hands have crucified

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the Lord of life; and therefore your expected felicity is turned to misery, your glorious reign over all Nations, to a no less strange, then sad dissipation over all the earth; and your carnal security, to spiritual confusion: Wilt thou tell them this, and not expect their enmity?

From the Jew, go to the Turk, and tell him, abused Mussulman, your Prophet is an Impostor, his law, a lye, the carnal delights which he has promised you, will turn to unutterable dolours of soul, his beautiful women into mishapen hags, your harmonious musick, into hideous howling; and your delicious fare, into surfets of wo and bitterness. Wilt thou tell him this, and not expect his enmity?

2. But secondly, There are enemies within the pale of the Church too: *It is not* (saith *David*) *an open enemy that hath done me this dishonour, for then I could have born it: But it is thou,*

thou, mine own familiar, we walked in the houſe of God as friends, &c.

A ſtab from a friend, wounds the heart deeper then the body: while the body weeps in blood at the ſtroke, the ſoul bleeds in tears at the unkindneſs: *Brutus* received a greater wound from *Cæſar* then he gave, and *Cæſar* a greater wound from *Brutus* then his weapon, when he cryed, *& tu fili Brute!*

That misfortune doth moſt amaze, which we do leaſt expect; and thoſe injuries do moſt trouble, which we leaſt deſerve. No ſight ſo uncouth, as to ſee children pierce thoſe Breaſts which gave them ſuck. Good milk turns to bad blood in a wicked heart. The juice of the ſame Flower which becomes honey in the Bee, converts to poyſon in the Spider. Corrupt affections abuſe the greateſt bleſſings.

O dear and ſacred Mother! My ſoul ſhall weep in ſecret for thy ungrateful ſons: theſe Birds had not peck'd

peck'd out thine eyes, hadſt not thou brought them out; nor kick'd againſt thee, hadſt not thou fed them full of ſuch excellent viands of knowledge, which thus puffs them up. Haſt thou purchaſt ſuch a pure Reformation for them, from that adulterous Synagogue of Rome, with ſo much blood of thy deareſt children, that they ſhould turn their weapons into thine own bowels, to ſeek for a new one there?

There are ſure ſome crudities in their ill-diſpoſed ſtomacks, that have turned the wholſom food of the Church into theſe venomous practiſes: My Meditations have ſuggeſted four.

1. Scrupuloſity. 2. Envie. 3. Ignorance. 4. Ambition or Pride. Upon which, theſe four Beaſts in the Text do act their enmity againſt the Church: Scrupuloſity ſets forth unto us the Beaſt of the reeds: Envie the Bulls:

Bulls: Ignorance the Calves, and Pride the men that delight in war.

Scruples are the reeds: the Beaſt that lurks in them, is a peeviſh ſpirit: which thence takes all occaſions to prey upon the peace of the Church. Every blaſt of wind ſhakes the bending reed to and fro: every idle ſcruple ſtaggers the unſetled humoriſt in his obedience. Were theſe doubts the zeal of a well meaning mind, there might be place for pity, though not excuſe. Ignorance hath no praiſe, but what it gains by yeilding. There is ſafety in the greater and leſs degree of knowledge, whiles the middle ſort lies open to all aſſaults. The greater doth ſurmount all captious apprehenſions: the leſs, out of conſcience of its own weakneſs, ſubmits to the guidance of more able judgements: while the middle degree finds force enough to lead them into many labyrinths of doubts, but none to conduct them out.

But

But if their hearts be not as faulty as their heads, there is the ſpirit of meekneſs to reſtore, whom the ſpirit of errour hath miſled. 'Tis the Beaſts in the reeds that marreth all. A peeviſh ſpirit in a ſcrupulous conſcience. When love of contention would ſeem deſire of aſſurance, every ſtraw ſeems a block. How many fooliſh doubts are propoſed, wherein nothing is diſcovered, but the weakneſs of him that raiſed them. A weak brain, and a wilful heart, commonly go hand in hand: The one begins the quarrel, and the other maintains it. To endeavour their conviction, in ſtead of quenching the fire, does but blow the coals: Where ſatisfaction is but pretended to, it is never received; or if haply really intended, yet if not received, ſuſpition is but augmented; in either caſe, further diſpute doth more exaſperate then reclaim. They fear in arguing nothing but preſent contradiction,

ction, which though they cannot ſcape, they will not acknowledge; and though they cannot divert conviction, as uſually they do, by ſtarting to ſome other matter, if they cannot (I ſay) divert conviction, they yet will ſmother it in an outbraving contempt: A perverſe generation, which will not open their eyes to ſee a truth, which either they do not know, or not affect: Nothing can ſilence them, but either their own confuſion, or elſe the Churches. And this is the firſt, *the beaſt of the Reeds*; a peeviſh ſpirit in a ſcrupulous conſcience.

The ſecond is Envie, herein fitly emblematized by the Bull; for who can ſtop an enraged Bull? And who can ſtand before envie? ſaith the wiſe man, *Prov.* 27. Nothing is either more miſchievous or laſting, then enmity, whoſe foundation is laid upon envie.

Firſt, where envie is, there is confuſion, and every evil work, ſaith St. *James*.

James. It is impoſſible they ſhould be good themſelves, that maligne others for being ſo: or, that grieve, not becauſe themſelves want, but that another hath: Not becauſe themſelves are evil, but becauſe another will not be ſo too: Miſchief muſt needs be their greateſt delight, whoſe greateſt grief is anothers good,

Neither is it more hateful for its effects, then for its continuance. An injury may be forgotten, where ſufferance makes not the offenders more inſolent. But envie never ceaſeth, becauſe that ceaſeth not which occaſions it. Will you ſee one of theſe envious Bulls? You ſhall find *Zedekiah* with his iron horns, bellowing out defiance againſt *Micaiah*, in the voice of exprobation: *Which way went the Spirit of the Lord from me to thee?* How hath innocence and deſert been baited by the ſalvage Bulls of theſe times? Goring the ſides of their reputation with

with the horns of miſpriſion and detraction: And like that elder brother of theirs, the fore-named *Zedekiah*, blaſpheming the Spirit of the Lord, by aſcribing thereunto the acts of that ſpirit, that luſteth unto envie. But more of theſe in the proper place. Let this ſuffice for the ſecond ground of their enmity.

The third is ignorance, diſcovering its ſelf in the Calves of the people. Calves you know are but *ſtollida animalia*, ſilly creatures, do but follow where their Sires do lead them. Thoſe Calves of the Jewiſh Nation, had never cryed up the Lord Jeſus to be crucified for a ſeducer, had not themſelvs been ſeduced by thoſe envious Bulls, the chief Prieſts and Scribes, who perſwaded the people to ask *Barabbas*, and crucifie Jeſus. *I wiſt now* (Brethren) *that thorow ignorance ye did it, or elſe you would not have crucified the Lord of life*, ſaith St *Peter*. Ignorance

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is the mother of all miſchief, whatſoever it be that leads it, miſerable are the effects thereof.

Somtimes it is lead by paſſion, which overſways the judgement. Nothing doth more unman us, then this vice: a violent paſſion of grief at the proſperity of the wicked, tranſported even *David* himſelf, almoſt to condemn the generation of God's ſaints: his own teſtimony ſhall be our warrant; *So fooliſh was I, and ignorant, even as a beaſt before thee.* Another fit of furious zeal (for zeal is but a paſſion, if it be not according unto knowledg) enflamed Saint *Paul* to a bloody perſecution of God's Church.

Somtimes it is lead by affection, which blinds the judgement. Great affection is ſubject to great deceit: It firſt believes a poſſibility of that, to the liking whereof it is enchained: then ſtrains the wit to find out arguments to prove it as poſſible, as pleaſ-

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ing: The poſſibility of it thus fancied, begets a conceit that eaſily clothes it ſelf in a contented errour.

Somtimes ignorance is lead by ſelf conceit, which ſeduceth the judgment. The conceit of knowledge, ruines almoſt as many as the profeſſed want of it: How many had been better taught, if they had not thought they needed it not? How many had been happy, if they had had more knowledge, and leſs opinion of it? *Knowledge puffeth up*, ſaith St *Paul*, but that the conceit of it only ſhould do ſo too, is not more lamentable then uſual. Buſie ignorance is ever accompanied with an opinion of wiſdom.

Nor do ſuch more offend in the opinion they have of themſelves, then in that they have of others: They have a bad opinion of all that flatter not that good one they have of themſelves: Corrupt minds hate thoſe that love not that which they like in themſelves.

ſelves. This is another ground of that enmity that ſprings from ignorance. Let's ſee a fourth.

Somtimes it is lead by a prepoſſeſſion, which prevents the judgement: There is nothing more dangerous, then an haſty admittance of any thing into our allowance: What hath once won conſent upon the Will, is hardly removed. Deliberation preſuppoſeth doubt, and tends to choice; where choice is made, and we are already reſolved, deliberation is excluded as needleſs; and the errour is both ſwallowed and digeſted, ere the truth is propoſed; and when it is, it is rejected: for prepoſſeſſion begets affection, affection is impatient of contradiction: where we love to retain, we love not thoſe which would diſſwade us from it, that's another.

Somtimes it is lead by ſelf-intereſt, and that corrupts the judgement. If godlineſs be great gain, as St *Peter*

 ſaith,

ſaith, what are they that make great gain out of their godlineſs? A man may poſſibly reap ſecular advantage by that ſervice which he does for God: but not greedily affect it, without the juſt cenſure of guilt. *Abraham* would not be made rich by the King of *Sodom*. Either greedily or unjuſtly to heap up profit to themſelves in the proſecution of God's ſervice, is an undoubted argument that it was their own benefit, and not God's glory, that gave firſt motion to thoſe endeavours; although the deſire of gain may ſo blind the eyes, and pervert the judgement, as to deem the ſervice will acquit the guilt of thoſe corrupt affections. *Saul* had never impleaded the intent of ſacrifice in the reſervation of the Amalekitiſh cattel, had it not yeilded him ſome hope to wipe off the guilt of his diſobedience thereby. And although I dare not affirm, yet I dare ſuppoſe, that his

his words did but ſpeak his thoughts, and yet thoſe thoughts gave no diminution to his ſin, becauſe it was an evil eye firſt conveyed the motion of that ſervice into his heart.

When men make ſelf-intereſt the ſphere of their actions, they neither ſee, nor underſtand beyond it. And therefore St *Paul* made ſelf-ſeeking one character of the Churches enemies: *All ſeek their own.* The primitive Chriſtians did juſtly glory in the community of theſe outward things, as one evidence of their integrity. If this community did firſt help to ſupport the Church, for ought I know (ſo far as it pleaſeth God to permit) ſelf intereſt may help to pull it down. Theſe are the five grounds of that enmity which ſprings from ignorance.

The fourth general ground is pride, which ſets forth the men that delight in war. The analogie holds in this: Other ſins hate the light, Pride only

loves to be ſeen: The commiſſion of other ſins is attended with ſhame, perhaps we are humbled for them too, Pride only delights and glories in it ſelf; as therefore pride delights in its own enormity, ſo do they that delight in war, glory in their cruelty: ſober minded men wage war out of neceſſity, and have peace for their end, blood-thirſty and deceitful men raiſe war for delight, and have tyrannie for their aim. It is a prodigious pride in the hearts of theſe men in the valuation of themſelves, that think the blood of others a price low enough for their ambitious ends: But all may not aſpire: there is alſo a ſpiritual pride, which as it is more epidemical, ſo is it more deſtructive to men and Religion: Both the knowing are infected with it, and the ignorant too: It befools both, and by a ſtrange kind of working, it makes the knowing more learnedly ignorant, and the ignorant more opiniately knowing;

knowing; In both, it works a delight to diſturb the peace of the Church.

In reference to the firſt: There is nothing more dangerous then knowledge without grace, humility, and charity. The greateſt hereſies have ſprung from the deepeſt wits. *Thy wiſdom and thy knowledge have perverted thee*, ſaith the Prophet *Iſaiah*. Knowledge is good, without which the mind is not good, ſaith *Solomon*: but it oft proves bad, becauſe they are bad who uſe it. Thoſe reaches of the brain, which tend not to unity, are the buds of fury, not diſcretion; and argue more a love of contention, then deſire of Reformation; whether it be in oppoſing eſtabliſhed truths, by ſtraining the wit to find out how reaſon might back their diſ-affection to them, or elſe, by forging of errours, by caſting a fraudulent ſhew of reaſon upon thoſe things which are indeed reaſonleſs: Either way yeilding an

equal glory, ſtirs them up to ſhew the bravery of their buſie ſpirits. And there is no ignorance ſo miſchievous as perverted knowledge; nor doth Pride work only upon the knowing, but upon the ignorant alſo: Sometimes by arrogating a conceit of thoſe abilities, which as far tranſcend their capacities, as their conceit tranſcends their abilities. The men are in a dream, conceit is no more, but that's enough to beget a faculty *ſuperſentiendi*; by vertue whereof they are able to teach their teachers: if theſe were as forward to learn, as they were to inſtruct. Somtime again, by condemning all they cannot underſtand; and contemning learning, becauſe themſelves want it: as if (as that Oracle of humane wiſdom did once obſerve) reaſon were the only enemy of Religion, and childiſh ſimplicity the mother of ghoſtly wiſdom. Thus doth their practiſe juſtifie the wiſe man's con-

conſtant aſſeveration, by pride only cometh contention.

Thus have I ſhewn you that the Church hath enemies both abroad and at home; and the grounds of that enmity: A word of their cruelty, and then I will ſhew you what Beaſts they be.

We can as little expect, as find mercy at the hands of the profeſſed enemies of the Church: Their Religion doth as much commend, as their inclination excite their cruelty: But that the waters of the Sanctuary ſhould be turned into blood, is the aſtoniſhment of Angels as well as men. Oh that the blood of the Covenant God made with men, ſhould be turned into a covenant of blood, the engagement of Chriſtians to devour one another! A Turkiſh cruelty befits them, who have practically tranſlated Chriſt's Goſpel into *Mahomet's* Alcoran.

Nor does the retained name of, and profeſſion

profeſſion of Chriſtianity, ſerve to any other end, then that by ſeeming religious, they may be more ſecurely malicious. Agreements in ſome points, does but heighten the hatred occaſioned by difference in others: Falſe zeal tranſports them, fury knows no mean; doth neither fear, nor is ſatisfied with revenge. Like as we ſee in ſome ſudden tumults, where there is ſtore of pates, there is ſtore of confuſion; in which, while any one breaks forth into outrage and miſchief, emulation and deſire to ſeem no leſs zealous then he, prompts the ſecond to act the like, or a greater miſchief, till ſome few hands hath conveyed the example to all. So likely, when difference of opinion cauſeth difference of affection, it breaks forth into all hateful effects; the heart is enflamed with malice, that kindles the tongue to all bitter invectives, hateful revilings, terms of reproach, envious detractions, cauſ-

leſs

leſs ſlanders, falſe accuſations. The tongue ſummons up the hands to acts of violence, and haſtneth the feet to ſhed innocent blood, till at length all the affections joyn in the conſpiracy, and help to ſet forward the miſchief: love to their errors doth excite them, hope to prevail doth encourage them, paſſion precipitates them, and fear ſuggeſts neceſſity upon them, to go on, where nothing but ruine is expected in deſiſting: for that Religion being a matter of higheſt concernment, the undiſpenſable prop of States, the oppoſers thereof expect no favour, if ſucceſs in the defence thereof prove anſwerable to the endeavours; and it is uſual to ſhew no mercy, where we expect none; much leſs to expect any, where we have ſhewed none; they muſt be cruel.

Thus far of the propoſition raiſed from the general ſcope of the Text. I muſt now produce the enemies themſelves,

ſelves, and will firſt draw them up, and ſhew them in a full body, and then ſet them in their ſeveral ſtations.

Firſt, the Beaſt of the Reeds are a certain ſort of people, that undermining the peace of the Church by a fained ſhew of holineſs, theſe heap up Teachers to themſelves, who make a breach in the quiet ſtate thereof, and are the Bulls of the Text: who by bellowing out reviling reproaches againſt the eccleſiaſtical policy, beget the Calves of the people, who confuſedly run to their aſſiſtance, who arriving at the very point of bringing their long endeavours to a wiſhed period, up ſtarts a fourth ſort, the men of the Text that delight in war, I mean, this ſpiritual warfare, in whom alone (thanks be to ſome Romiſh Jeſuites for it) the art and policy of the other three do joyntly meet: As firſt, pretending as great, nay, greater ſhew of holineſs. 2. Arrogating bet-

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ter abilities of teaching by inſpiration, and yet as very Calves as the reſt; and theſe like *Jehu* (though not in act, yet in deſire) march furiouſly on, beat down all before them, ſnatch the power out of the others hands, beat down Churches, diſanuls all Orders, overthrows all Eccleſiaſtical policy, confounds Religion, and delight in it too, and glories in their miſchief. Thus have I ſhown the enemies in groſs, obſerve them now in their particular ranks.

1. The Beaſt of the Reeds, ſome tranſlations read, a company of Spear men; the word in the Original reconciles the reading: It ſignifies both a company, and a Beaſt, ſay Expoſitors upon the text. If we tranſlate it a company, it imports a rank of men, armed with Spears, made of a certain kind of Reeds: Spears were in uſe in *David*'s time, they uſed then that weapon to gore the ſides of his myſtical body,

body, with which a wretched caitiff pierced the ſide of his natural body, *John* 19. 34. But if we refer the ſenſe to the ſignification of a Beaſt, it denotes ſome perillous beaſt, which out of the covert of their reedy thickets, attends the opportunity of their deſired prey, the ſpecification of theſe other Beaſts in the text, prompts my inclination to this ſenſe. What manner of Beaſt this ſhould be, my former reading determines not; Our Chriſtian *Seneca* out of *Caſſiodor.*, conjectures it a Lyon, *Leones canneta reliquerunt*, ſaith he. Give me leave to add *Pardus* unto *Leo*; If *Leones*, Lyons, for their proud inſulting; *Leopardi*, Leopards, for their cunning inſinuating. The great Naturaliſt obſerves it of this beaſt, the Leopard, that being by nature endowed with a ſweet odoriferous ſcent, but of a formidable aſpect, will hide it ſelf in ſome ſecret place (what better then a thicket

et of reeds?) for otherwiſe, the uglineſs of its ſhape would more affright, then the ſweetneſs of its ſcent allure: the terror of its ſight being thus ſecured, his ſweet ſavour and ſcent allures other Beaſts to the place, upon whom, when they come within the compaſs of his reach, he ſeizeth thence upon, as his deſired prey.

Your thoughts cannot fall beſides the application. The Hypocrite is this Beaſt. A generation of ſuch beaſts have made this age infamous to all poſterity, who cloak their miſchievous intent under a ſhew of ſanctity. Holy ſemblances, religious proteſtations, pretences of Reformation, are the ſweet allurements, whereby they attract the hearts, and ſteal the affections of the ſilly Calves; whom, when the pleaſing ſavour of theſe Saint-like profeſſions, have drawn into an engagement with them, they make the inſtruments of their own thraldome,

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and the Churches ruine. As the Divel did of old, ſo ſtill his ungodly imps, betray others to the guilt of evil practiſes, by faming ſome good to be reaped by it. There be many ſecret reaches in the myſtery of iniquity; they pretend good, when they act evil; and intend evil, when they act good. Crafty and ſubtle men ſeem always good, that they may be once bad to purpoſe. All operations tend to ſome end: It was an aim at an higher degree of perfection, that firſt occaſioned ſin in the world; and the greateſt evils are ſtill occaſioned by pretending it.

When men appear ſo good, and are not, they muſt have ſome evil end, or elſe ſome ill intent: The firſt thing they conceive withal, is glory and applauſe: Who take upon them the ſemblance of doing like Saints, but are not, although they ſtand condemned of themſelves; becauſe they know how

how to be good, and are not: yet men uſually dare not think them to be bad, whom they ſee know ſo well how to be good. Glittering pretences dazles the eyes of men, God only judges of the action by the heart, man of the heart by the actions. When as therefore God hath placed majeſty as well as beauty in the face of Vertue, that where the one cannot allure, the other may enforce reſpect: Hence it is, that wicked men admire and reverence that power of godlineſs, which yet they deny to practiſe; and vain-glorious men practiſe that godlineſs, the power whereof they yet deny: coveting more to be honoured for it, then bettered by it. So glory is the firſt.

Self-intereſt is the ſecond. Religious they will be, and't be but for the benefit they receive thereby. *Saul* will be devout, that he may preſerve ſuch goodly cattel; he will keep them to ſacrifice to the Lord: ſome perhaps to

God, but most to his belly. The people of *Sichem*'s country will enter into the covenant of God with Israel, on condition that Israel's substance might be theirs, *Gen.* 34. 23. It is the hateful practise of these times, wherein the encrease of knowledge hath been the bane of practise, to pretend Religion, and intend Promotion: But God and Mammon cannot dwell together. Religion was never the principal end of those undertakings, where they that manage the cause, thrive so fast upon it, and grow more rich, then they were before devout. A rich man may be truly pious, but they are justly suspected, who so greedily work riches out of piety: the blessing is promised to them that lose all for Christ, not to them who gain all by him. It is very hard for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of heaven, but it is harder for them that make themselves rich by pretending to it. They can expect

no reward from God, that pay themſelves ſo well for the ſervice they do for him. Self-intereſt then, is the ſecond end.

But thirdly, Will you ſee the very Divel in *Samuel*'s Mantle? Here comes malice and miſchief under the cloak of piety too. How often hath malice wrought out its own ſatisfaction, wherein the pretence hath been only zeal to Religion? How often have men, by how much the more they have pretended ſervice to God, by ſo much the more injurious violence have they harboured under that pretence, to proſecute their diſſenting Brethren? They that dare rob God of glory, leſs care what outrage and miſchief they do to man, ſo they may do it with credit, advantage, and ſafety. And although to a more vigilant obſervation, hypocriſie is ſeldom without thoſe practiſes, without which we ſhould not know it to be hypocri-

ſie, God permits them to go ſo far, that till by their fruits they might be known, yet vulgar eyes ſees not the malice and miſchief that is palliated under ſuch ſpecious and plauſible inſinuations. I had almoſt ſaid, that miſchief is ever intended by ſpecious pretences, which are ever aſſumed for the effecting of it. And the gall of this bitterneſs is, that this miſchief is not to be diverted, either by lenity, or benefits, or by wiſdom: Firſt, not by lenity; for if they think they do well, (as many of the ſeduced Calves may do, like thoſe in Jeruſalem, *who followed Abſolon in the ſimplicity of their hearts*) upon this account, they think toleration of them, to be an effect of that awful regard which is due unto ſuch pretenſions, and not of lenity: which gives more encouragement to proceed, then works any relenting ſubmiſſion. Or if the ſpirits either of malice, or of contention, or of the world

world employ them, as without doubt one of these spirits does the Bulls of the Text, forbearance then does but serve for an incitement more contemptuously to provoke. Secondly, The mischief is not to be diverted by benefits; for that advantage is always greater, which they hope to gain by successful commotions, then undeserved favour. Lastly, Not by wisdom, for strong pretensions, if they win not belief, yet they make even wise men suspend their judgements; if they draw not help, yet they make men that they do not oppose. And to be sure, hypocrites put not off their counterfeit shape, till they have so far advanced their intended wickedness, till it be past redress. Nor do they receive discouragement from the discovery of a few more piercing eyes, for, for the most part, men are generally either ensnared by it, or else amated; either engaged to help, or resolved not

to oppoſe; and who are back'd with the aſſiſtance of many, fear not the power of a few. In a word, there is nothing more eaſie then to be ſucceſful, where men dare make Religion a cloak for their wickedneſs, and dare allow in themſelves, violation of oaths, and the perpetration of any unjuſt and ungodly actions, that may promote their deſigns. And theſe are the firſt rank, the Beaſt of the Reeds. *Rebuke, O Lord, the Beaſt of the Reeds.*

The ſecond is a multitude of Bulls. The effects of the rage and brutiſh qualities of theſe beaſts, are found in none more eminently, then in a ſort of factious Miniſters, who creep into the Church of God, and occaſioneth this ſad confuſion of it. *The Paſtors are become brutiſh*, ſaith the Prophet *Jeremiah*, chap. 10. 21. Brutiſh is a general term, ſet down to expreſs the various effects of their cruel diſpoſitions, which are not to be compriſed in

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any one particular word. Hence it is, that for the waſte they make in the Church, they are called Boars, *Pſal.* 80 for their factious Schiſms, Foxes cubs, *Cant.* 2. 15. for devouring ſouls, they are called ravening Wolves, *Mat.* 7. 15. for their poyſonſome malice, Serpents, and Vipers, *Mat.* 3. for their greedineſs, dogs, *Phil.* 3. 2. for their bloody perſecution of their Brethren, they are called Bulls of Baſan, *Pſalm* 22. 12. which Pſalm is a Propheſie of Chriſt, the principal actors of whoſe death, were the chief Prieſts and Scribes; to this Beaſt the text reſembles theſe their Succeſſors. Bulls, eſpecially if enraged, are fierce, headſtrong, mad, they roar, ſpurn, ſcrape up earth, traverſe the ground, exalt their horns, breath out fury, and ſcorn all oppoſition whatſoever. Such are the qualities of thoſe factious and ſchiſmatical Miniſters which did infeſt the Church.

First, They are fierce: Men of lean abilities, what they cannot attain by deſert, will endeavour by faction; and it is eaſie to find exceptions, when we reſolve to oppoſe: what a numerous iſſue did they pretend burdened their weak and tender conſciences? but all begotten by envie, upon miſapprehenſion; but how weak ſoever their exceptions be, they are violently inſiſted on; What bitter invectives did they froth out againſt a few innocent Rites, and things of unimporting conſequence, in compariſon of thoſe many horrid blaſphemies, hereſies, and frenzies, that have hurried ſo many thouſand ſouls ſince to hell and damnation? Every fancied diſlike tranſports them into rage and fury; they are all on fire in deteſtation, though the things that incenſe them, carry no other blame, but what their miſconſtruction gives them. *Their hands and their feet ſpeak as loud, as their tongues,*

tongues, ſaith the Wiſeman, *Prov. 6. 13.* as if there were as much ſenſe in the noiſe of the one, as in the voice of the other: The leſs reaſon they have for the diſturbance they make, the more would they ſeem to have; they would have the bitterneſs of their malice, evince the betterneſs of their cauſe; and the vehemency of contending, prove them to have ſome great reaſon for the doing that, which indeed ſhews they have neither reaſon nor Religion: An indiſcreet paſſion in all ſtrifes, either imports ſome ſecret guilt, or elſe betray us to it.

Secondly, Nor are they more furious then head-ſtrong. There is no tyrannie like to that of a ſlave, whom vilany hath ſet a cock-horſe: Nothing can divert him from that miſchief which he hath once reſolved; ſo it is in the Iſle of Man. When corrupt affections have inſlaved the judgment, it is to no end for the captive to give a

Law

to the Law to the conquerours, which will admit none. When the affections which are the servants to the superiour powers of the soul, get the mastery, they commonly beget an invincible resolution not to alter our perswasions: Shame will not permit them to yeild, whom desire of glory caused to contend. The more zeal they have shown in a wrong cause, the more ignominious would their conviction be; and consequently, their resolutions more engaged to persist. The Church must be pulled down, to make up the breaches of their reputation. Nothing is more terrible to contentious spirits, then to read their own shame in the suppression of mischief fruitlesly attempted: Reputation must maintain what ignorance did broach. To mis-apprehend, denotes a man. 'Tis head-strong persistance that degrades him into a Beast: Silliness and stubbornness fattens them in that Bestiality. Third-

3. In this fury and obstinacy, they out-run their wits: a violent prosecution of their religionated designs of mischief, transports them into ridiculous fits of madness: *The Prophet is a fool, the spiritual man is mad*, saith the Prophet *Hosea*, chap. 9. 7. what is folly but a tame madness? What is madness, but a raging folly? *The fool rageth, and is confident*, saith the wise man: mad conceits, mad gestures, mad practises, make up those mad Bulls.

1. Mad conceits; They run to hell, and say they are going to heaven: They practise the Divel, and say they are taught of God so to do. They confound Religion, and say they restore it: Sacrilege they would christen in blood with the name of devotion; their confused and incongruous intermixture of the different parts of prayer, vain battologies, yea unsavory non-sense, they conceive for method,

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the direction; for matter, the immediate dictates of the holy Spirit; and many ſuch like mad conceits they have.

2. Mad geſtures; Staring, grinning, gnaſhing, toſſing themſelves, this way, that way, up and down; thumping, beating, ſtamping, and the like; theſe they deem the becomming deportments of holy zeal, and divine raviſhment.

Laſtly, Mad actions; Like him who took up a ſtone to beat off a fly from his neighbor's forehead, which knockt out his brains: Or like that other, that to ſhave the hair, cut off the head. I need not ſpeak the application. O once moſt glorious Church, now mended into ruine! O monſtrous Reformation! But the proper work of ſuch frantick Bulls, They are mad.

Fourthly, They are roaring Bulls: With what ſtrained throats do they ſtund the giddy multitude into wonder

der and ſeducement? What Civil Atheiſm do they bellow out againſt that Authority, to which the Law of God, and man, and themſelves had ſubjected them? With what impetuous clamours do they blaſpheme God into an engagement with them, by chalging a protection from him, in their ſacrilegious and unjuſt proceedings? As if they would level heaven with hell in the allowance of their practiſes. With what loud clamours do they cry up the Lord Jeſus into a pretended Throne, prepared for him in the Forge of their own fancies? With what ſwelling words of oſtentation, would they deifie their Cauſe, with a preſumptuous Warrant of its happy ſucceſs? To whom the Proverb hath hapned true, *None more ſhamefully deceived, then thoſe that thought themſelves moſt confidently aſſured.* Laſtly, How do they thunder out damnation againſt all oppoſers of them? For they are roaring Bulls Fifthly,

Fifthly, They scrape up earth. No far-fetch'd emblem of these spiritual Bulls, in their greedy scraping up these hardned clods of white and red earth. The desire of wealth and preferment, hath taught them to be religious. God must be beholding to Mammon for the service these men do for him. They have prepared Christ Jesus a Throne, but they will be paid well for the setting it up. Wicked men hold that Religion best, which they most thrive by; nor will set up any, but by what they may. They had not that preferment which they desired, but considered not they desired that which they deserved not; and it is not so easie to counterfeit Learning as Religion. What? Are they so good? and yet so covetous? Surely these men are the only men that have got a way to reconcile God and the world together.

Sixthly, They exalt their horns:

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They are as proud as covetous; a pair of ſins that uſually go hand in hand, ſaith pious *Bernard*. There is nothing ſo hateful as a proud Prieſt; becauſe the holieſt Calling makes the greateſt ſinner. Pride was firſt begot in Heaven, by the reflex of an Angel's underſtanding upon his own excellency, and it ſtill aſpires to an eminency in eminency in them, who profeſs themſelves moſt heavenly. Holy ſemblances hath ſet upon them an high eſteem in other mens opinions: Self love doubles it in their own. True piety humbles us; It is no marvel if their fain'd piety puffs them up in a proud eſtimation of themſelves, they deſpiſe others; *Come not near, for I am holier then thou.* With what a ſcornful eye do they look upon thoſe, who have not learn'd an high eſtimation of, and a due ſubmiſſion to them, as the only ſupporters of Religion. Surely Saint *Paul* when he ſaid, *Let every one think*

others

others better then themselves, spake not to them who make a proud contempt of others, all the arguments they have of their own excellency:

Seventhly, They breathe out fury: In what bloody characters do they write the evidence of their pride and covetousnes? What they cannot attain by the sword of God, they will by the sword of *Gideon*: who ever knew errour not accompanied with violence and cruelty? They sow Sedition, raise tumults, rend the Church, and run to violence for security. They more fear the power of men, then of God; or else they would never seek to secure themselves from the one, by those mischievous practises, which doth more incense the other.

Lastly, Like enraged Bulls, they break thorow all opposition; for what can restrain them?

Can perswasions? No; for reason can never perswade them to desist, how

who had no reaſon to attempt, but hope to prevail. They who have no reaſon but their Will, will hear none againſt it.

Secondly, Can Conſcience? No; for they will not fear to commit ſin againſt their Conſcience, who dare to pretend Conſcience for the ſin which they do commit. That Conſcience which will for its own end patronize ſome ſins, to advance thoſe ends will act any.

Thirdly, Can Duty reſtrain them? No; for while they pretend to higher perfection then is taught in the Church, they forget to acknowledge that degree whereunto ſhe hath brought them; and are more ready to quarrel at her defects, then to reverence her graces, as if thoſe might better juſtifie a ſeparation from her, then theſe challenge any thankfulneſs or duty to her.

Fourthly, Can Laws reſtrain them?

No; for the uſe of Law is not to perſwade, but to enforce: But their Conſcience, they ſay, may not be forced. A true principle, but they may either ignorantly apply it, or elſe maliciouſly: Though the coercive power of the Law hath no juſt dominion over the Conſcience, yet may not every ſilly pretence of Conſcience be obtruded, to render the power of Laws of none effect. They ignorantly apply it, who make thoſe things matter of Conſcience, upon which the Conſcience has no immediate influence; as certainly it cannot have upon things which are not directly prohibited by God's Word. Where obedience is required by lawful Authority, wherein yet, a man doubteth whether he may obey or not; that man cannot without ſottiſh ignorance, be ſaid to be perſwaded in Conſcience that he may not obey, unleſs he can produce ſome juſt prohibition from Scripture,

Scripture, of the things whereunto his obedience is required. Or ſecondly, They may maliciouſly apply it, and often do ſo too, when 'tis the Authority that enjoyns them, that doth more diſtaſte, then the things enjoyned. In vain ſhall they complain of ſeverity, that do all they can to provoke it; but in the mean time, whether they apply it ignorantly or maliciouſly, they make no Conſcience to violate thoſe Laws which they pretend would force them againſt their Conſcience.

Fifthly, Can ſhame reſtrain them? No; for the fear of that can never deter them, which they preſume ſhall never happen, eſpecially where there is certain ſhame in deſiſting, and a conceited aſſurance both of gain and glory too in proceeding: Powerful arguments both, to win upon corrupt affections: For ſome will be always found to commend thoſe attempts, that are by never ſo wicked means

crowned with ſucceſs.

Sixthly, Will a perſonal Oath reſtrain them? No; for an Oath, which is a moſt ſacred thing, cannot partake of any thing which is evil, *Herod* ſealed his promiſe with an Oath, but that Oath had no obligation from the ſtrumpets demand. If *Herod* had broke that Oath, it could not have made him perjured; becauſe no Oath can binde to an unlawful action. Whence they may have argued, that they may ſafely renounce that obedience, though by oath engaged to it, which an after new light hath diſcovered to be contrary to the power of Godlineſs, but if this new light be nothing elſe but either 1. A ſetled reſolution to do what we have a mind to. Or, 2. Some violent prevailing fancy, that hath ſtole firſt upon our affections, then upon our judgements. Or 3. A ſtrong perſwaſion begotten by private ends, and received growth from falſe principles.

Or

Or 4. Diabolical Infuſion; for it muſt needs be ſo when injurious, malicious, and apparent ungodly practiſes are uſed for the promotion of pretended piety; if it be (I ſay) any of theſe pretty Images (which this new light hath inſinuated into theſe men) diſguiſed under the name of Conſcience, what ſhall become of them? What will they do? when they ſhall lie under the ſtinging laſhes of a guilty Conſcience, and the either dreadful apprehenſions, or unſufferable ſtrokes of divine wrath and indignation, both for their own breaking through the ſacred tye and band of a juſt, lawful, ancient, ſolemn, and holy oath, and cancelling all other bands of Religion and Reaſon; but alſo, as if men did not run faſt enough to hell and damnation before, for that they ſhould hold forth this light to others, to make them run the faſter.

Seventhly, and laſtly, Will a Nati-

onal Covenant reſtrain them? No; for that Covenant which they entered into for ſelf-ends, it failing to effect thoſe ends, they will as readily break, and (if they can) work their deſires into fruition by any means, though never ſo contrary to that League, or any part thereof: Who fear not to take an oath contrary to God's Law, will not fear to break, if contrary to their own, not ſo much as unlawful, but as invalid: Not, out of conviction that they ought not advance their own ends by it, but out of vexation, that they cannot.

Thus have I ſhown you the Bulls of the Text. Now let us ſee the Calves of the people, whom they miſlead in their trains of errour. *They cauſe my people to err, by their lightneſs and lies*, ſaith the Prophet. There are no ſuch plagues to a Commonwealth as ſeditious Prieſts. The infection of errour is worſe then the guilt; it no ſooner finds

finds approbation in one, but it borrows his perſwaſions for entertainment in another. But keep we to the Bulls, the grand ring-leaders of all; how many pernicious Tenents have found both allowance and entertainment in vulgar minds, from the authority of them, whoſe poſitions they have found to jump with their own affections and private ends, whence proceeds an admiration of their perſons for advantage ſake, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, which comes at length to a belief of the infallibility of their poſitions in all things, whom they finde uncontrollable in ſome, and remark'd for men that pretend to a greater meaſure of ſanctity then others. Now when theſe begin to make a breach in Church, thoſe incitations againſt the preſent ſtate of things, never want favourable audience, which have prepared their way by the opinion of their holineſs from whom they pro-

with what ſpungy ſouls do theſe poor Calves ſoak in theſe waters of the Sanctuary, which their applauded Teachers have either ignorantly or deceitfully corrupted, to intoxicate them! They are firſt induced to believe, then to defend; and the bold predictions of ſucceſs from the *Zedekiahs* of the times, and a miſchievous confidence in the ſwelling numbers of their partiſans, gives them encouragement to all acts of violence and outrage. Wicked men ask no leave to do, when they find their hearts in their hands; I mean, their power anſwerable to their will: And now travelling with the pangs of a falſe zeal, they fall in labour of a monſtrous Reformation: Religion, and Liberty of Conſcience, are made the grounds of their quarrel. An eaſie perſwaſion wins the aſſiſtance of the Vulgar to thoſe attempts, whereby they are taught to believe, they ſhall at once do

ſervice

ſervice to God, and right to themſelves. But hear, O ye ſeduced Calves of the people! It is the ſhew of goodneſs that maintains ſin in the world: The world could not be ſo bad as it is, if all that were bad in it did appear ſo. Theſe Bulls could not have train'd you on to theſe acts of violence and outrage, but by diſſembled piety: but you muſt know, it is almoſt as great a crime in matters of Religion, to be deceived, as to deceive. God will require your blood at their hands, but you alſo may die in your ſins; and when you are in hell, it will be no eaſe to you that they are more tormented. There is nothing more pleaſing to the Divel, then to ſee his malice againſt the Church, to tryumph in your folly and miſpriſion. It was once piety to build Temples to the publique ſervice of God, and is it now piety to pull them down? Did you pretend to fight for Religion, to keep it from the viola-

violation of others, that ye might commit a rape upon it your ſelves? But alas, the wound is incurable; Here is no room for expoſtulation; let us therefore ſee in a word the Religion this many headed monſter hath hatch'd, and the liberty of conſcience they would have: Theſe alſo having their particular aims, either ſecular advantage, or deſirous to paſs for men enflamed with a godly zeal, or rather led by both together, for they have learned this art from the Bulls, their Sires, to have reconciled gain and godlineſs, profit and zeal; profit pricks forward zeal, as provender does the Aſs, and their zeal countenanceth them in the profit they get, and then it is piety in them to pull down Churches, which was once piety to build up: It is pure devotion that conſecrates their fingers to the committing of ſacriledge: It is the fire of zeal that kindles their tongues

to

to all manner of bitter invectives, a-gainſt all kind of Order and Govern-ment; It is love to the truth makes them lovers of themſelves in ſtanding for it: It is hatred of ſin makes them ſo malicious: It is ſeparation from the wicked that makes them void of Chriſtian ſociety, and common Mo-rality; and ſo full of pride, ſcorn, and contempt: It is fear of maintaining idleneſs, that makes them ſo uncharitable: It is the correction of nature, makes them without natural affection: and the rooting out the wicked, makes them unjuſt: and their liberty of con-ſcience, is the practiſe of all this impi-ety permitted with impunity. The ſum of all, It's a Religion that will give them liberty to break down all the Houſes of God in the Land, and ſeize upon the Revenews thereof, and tye the Miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt to their allowance; a Religion that may give them liberty to commit ſacriledge, to

ſpeak

ſpeak evil of Dignities, to turn the wicked out of their eſtates, and inveſt them in their inheritance: Briefly, a Religion that may tolerate and countenance, yea, and juſtifie them in their covetous, malicious, cruel, unnatural, uncivil, proud, contemptuous, and uncharitable actions. This is only the Religion and Liberty of Conſcience that will pleaſe the Calves: In the ſweet paſtures whereof we will turn them to graſs, and come to the fourth rank, *The men that delight in war.*

There be five marks of the delight men take in war.

Firſt, When they attempt it upon fained cauſes.

Secondly, upon frivolous cauſes.

Thirdly, When they attempt it againſt the rules of that faith which they profeſs.

Fourthly, Out of pride and vainglorious ends.

Fifthly, The cruelty with which they manage it. An-

Anſwerable hereunto, there are five things which in the ſpiritual application of it, will make up theſe men of blood. Bloody Brains, Bloody Conſciences, a Bloody Religion, Bloody Affections, and laſtly, Bloody hands.

1. When it attempted upon fained cauſes; There be bloody brain'd men, who are witty in nothing more, then in picking quarrels. It was a wiſe argument of a wicked King of Iſrael concluding a quarrelſome intent in the Syrian King, in the requeſt of a thing beyond the compaſs of humane power, the cure of *Naamans* leproſie, *Am I in God's ſtead, that he ſhould ſeek occaſion againſt me?* The Syrian did not, but the conjecture yet was grounded upon good reaſon. *There is a generation*, ſaith *Solomon*, *that ſeek rebellion:* that is, do all that they can to provoke, that out of enforced juſtice they may ſeek occaſion of revenge: and then

then like *Jonah*, they dare out-face God and his word, that they *do well to be angry*. They seek offences, that they may commit them: and oft times nothing grieves them so much, as when they can find no occasion to be provoked; which when they find not, they fain; if they meet not with, they make: What black comments do they write upon the fairest actions? All offers of peace they translate into the language of suspition, and measures others intents by their own guilt. *David*'s piety in talking to them of peace, is but policy in their gloss; they had no mind to believe what he spake, that had no mind to that of which he spake; and the preparations which they make to offend him, they pretend but a necessity, to defend themselves: *While I speak to them of peace, they make themselves ready to Battel*, saith he: but let them subtlely insinuate necessary defence, sure enough the preparations

they

they make, ſhew a delight in war. Nor are they more crafty in laying the grounds of their hoſtile deſigns, then in managing the proſecution of them. So far as piety may advance them, they can counterfeit innocence, while they oppreſs it. But when it comes to groſs wickedneſs, they can both deſie and practiſe it. And this is the firſt thing that make up theſe men of blood; bloody Brains, that plot out occaſions of commotion.

The ſecond mark is, When they attempt it upon frivolous cauſes: Bloody Conſciences! Men that out of conſcience can make thoſe quarrels deadly, which indeed deſerve not to be quarrels: Conſciences that can ſwallow down whole draughts of Chriſtian blood, to the effuſion where of a wretched ſcrupuloſity in things of indifferent nature prompted them. Eſtridge Conſciences, that can digeſt iron, but not ſtraw. Conſciences that ſtar-

ſtartle at doing of what God forbideth not, but without remorſe or ſcruple, can fall upon thoſe inhumane practiſes which God abhors; as if a ſuperſtitious nicety in ſmaller matters, could by way of commutation expiate the guilt of ſuch bloody outrages, which needs muſt damn. Theſe are the ſecond mark.

3. The third mark of the delight they take in war, is, when they attempt it contrary to the rules of that faith which they profeſs. Bloody conſciences beget a bloody Religion. Chriſt will own no Religion, but what is chriſtned in his own blood; It is the divel's (of whom *Mahomet* learn'd it) that is dipt in the blood of men. Our Saviour came indeed to bring a ſword, but *Peter* muſt not uſe it. Hear O ye Chriſtians! miſtake not your Saviour, meddle not with this ſword. Neceſſary it is that offences come, but wo unto them by whom they come.

Chriſt

Chriſt came indeed to die, but they were never the leſs wicked that killed him: Can the neceſſity of his ſuffering juſtifie that malice, cruelty, and injuſtice by which he ſuffered? God bringeth good out of evil, becauſe otherwiſe he could not permit it a moment in the world, without deſtroying it: But doth God allow the evil for the good? Permiſſion is no allowance. Or can he make that which is evil in it ſelf to be good? He may not impute a ſin to a man, yet cannot but repute it for a ſin; he may remit the guilt of ſin, but not alter the nature of it: But it ſeems theſe men can do more then God, they can legitimate any wickedneſs, with a *fiat* from the unerring Court of their own Conſciences; for if they cannot, thoſe actions ſurely which cauſed the death of Chriſt, can never give life to his cauſe. He ſuffered through injuſtice for our ſakes, but does he require we ſhould

do it too for his ſake? Oh the myſtery of this new light! (for the myſtery of it is as dark as the pit out of which it came) It was once, Thou ſhalt ſuffer wrong of others for his ſake, but now it ſeems we may do it too for his ſake: It was once you ſhall be perſecuted for my cauſe, but now, we may perſecute: It was once, ye ſhall be killed for my ſake, but now we may kill. Nay, ſo many, the moſt inhumane, cruel, bloody actions; ſuch, which no generation but this ever did the like; and at which the ears of all poſterity ſhall tingle, have been done, and yet a cauſe we have can make them lawful; a light we have can juſtifie them: nay more, none truly enlightned, none zealous for the cauſe of Chriſt, but ſuch who either act, or ſide with the actors of them. But O my ſoul! Come not thou into the ſecrets of this cauſe; and by this light, my better, be not thou directed: For

that

that cauſe, or that Religion which is planted by ſedition, watered with blood, that brings forth pride, feeds ambition, maintains ſacriledge, nouriſheth hatred, malice, uncharitableneſs, and injuſtice, and is upholden by lying, however ſtrength of conceit may ſeduce the judgement, hath no author but ſome of thoſe wicked ſpirits, who have broke looſe from their chains of darkneſs, and transformed themſelves into Angels of light, that they might range a land, to ſeduce the minds, and pervert the ways of a people, whoſe hearts, pride, ſelf love, and ſelf conceit had prepared for their entertainment. In a word, 'tis a wicked Religion, eſpecially profeſſing it ſelf Chriſtian, that dares juſtifie proceedings, contrary to the rules of Chriſt's Goſpel, and they are men of brazen brows, and reprobate ſenſe, that ſhall preſume to divide Chriſt himſelf, as well as his coat; I mean, to enforce

a belief upon us, that he would teach us one thing by his Goſpel, and his Goſpel another thing by them: Or, that that Religion which tolerates the worſt actions, ſhould demonſtrate the beſt Chriſtians; Or, that that Religion which teacheth us to ſuppreſe ſacrilegious and unjuſt actions, ſhould tolerate the ſame actions, though in its own defence, is a riddle to men and Angels. And thus much of their Religion.

4. When they attempt it for proud and vain-glorious ends: Bloody Affections. Pride firſt bred the quarrel between God and man. *Adam* would have been a God, before he knew well what it was to be a man; and while he thought to betroth a Deity, he betrayed humanity; and fell, I had almoſt ſaid, as much below himſelf, as he thought to have been above. And there is ſtill a ſecret pride in the heart of man, that lifts up it ſelf to a ſecret

ſecret affectation of a Deity: and therefore as a juſt and proper punishment, men ſtill as men, aſpire to be what they are not, and reaching in their fancies at an higher degree of perfection in knowledge, they diſquiet both themſelves and others in the purſuit thereof. How did the Arian hereſie fill the whole world with war and blood? If diſcontent firſt broach'd that hereſie, yet it was pride of heart that brewed it, and ſtirred up his buſie ſpirit, by inventing ſome notable novelty of doctrine, to inſinuate to the world, how far his competitor came behind him, who was yet preferred to that Eccleſiaſtical Dignity before him. Of all affections, the deſire of being Authors of ſome new device in matters of Religion, is (if not the ſtrongeſt) yet to ſome moſt pleaſing. There are ſome contentious ſpirits, that hugely delight to ſwim againſt the ſtream. While the thoughts are

tickled with the ſweetneſs of fame, the itch of vain glory preſently infect the powers of the ſoul, and there is no man which (if that lovely pair, charity and humility interpoſe not) but will dote upon the iſſues of his own brain, and propoſe them to general entertainment: yea, they will at once both wonder, and be angry, wonder at the incapacity, and be angry at the obſtinacy of any that ſhall refuſe to yeild that approbation and reception of them, which themſelves, the Authors, think them worthy of. Whence ſprings an earneſt deſire (and that deſire whets the endeavours, by any means whatſoever, to win entertainment for them in the allowance and belief of men; nor do they regard what practiſes they uſe to effect it. The wickedneſs of the means, is guilded over with the ſplendour of the reputation they hope ſhall be gained by it; either fear or favour, inability to reſiſt,

ſiſt, or affection to defend, ſtrike reprehenſion dumb, and ſomtimes blind, meaſuring juſtice in the cauſe, by the ſword ſhe holds in the one hand, and not by the ballance in the other; but it is not more pleaſing to the Authors, as pernicious to the Church. Like as we ſee in ſecular intereſts; No man can riſe, but by the fall of another. Every one covets his own advantage, which depending on the deſtruction of anorher, he ſeeks it there. So it is here, Errour cannot riſe, but truth muſt fall; what the one doth gain, the other loſeth; the intereſt of either, depends upon the ruine of the other; and truth and errour never happen to quarrel, but they leave bloody marks behind them upon the body of the Church. But the gall of this bitterneſs too, is, that when the ſucceſs of errour hath crown'd the endeavours of thoſe, whoſe pride of heart and vain-glory

gave it birth; the very fruition of their desires stops not the issue: for what is acquired by violence, must by violence be preserved: Heresie would have less guilt, if the defence thereof did not necessitate the addition of more, or at least, the continuance of the same mischief, which the introduction gave beginning to: wherein they are not unjustly said to delight, if not as the principal end of their desires yet as a means for the accomplishment of that end. That's the fourth mark of them that delight in War, attempted for proud and vain-glorious ends.

5. The last mark is, Their cruelty which they shew in managing of it. If there be a bloody heart, there will be a bloody hand too. Men would think it vain to be wicked, if they should not make use of their wickedness: whose covetous and other base ends, have carried them beyond the bounds of

of Law and Equity, care not whither they run: The apprehenſion of their danger, frights them into all acts of violence, for their ſecurity. They think all plot their ruine, that ſide not with them; and therefore ſeek their own ſafety, though it be with the ruine of all. But ſafety, which firſt occaſioned this cruelty, ends it not. For guilty fear brings malice with it into a wicked heart; when that is eaſed, this will alſo be ſatisfied. So that now diſpoſition cauſeth cruelty, as well as neceſſity, and that ſafety which at firſt was fought by it, ends at laſt with a delight in it. And thus much of the enemies, I will briefly touch the imprecation.

The Imprecation is made up of two terms, but of different affections; It is but *Rebuke* the three firſt; it is *Scatter* the fourth. Whence we note,

That reprehenſion muſt be proportioned as well to the manner of offending

fending, as the nature of the offence. Circumſtances, though they do not alter the nature, yet may aggravate the hainouſneſs of crimes. It is the intent that extends the guilt: and the manner of committing the offence either ſhews it capable of being reſtrained in a wholſome rebuke, or elſe worthy of judgement in a juſt diſſipation. *Rebuke*, and *Scatter*.

To Rebuke, tends to a poſſible conviction, that ends with Reformation. To Scatter, tends to an otherwiſe impoſſible fruſtration, that ends with confuſion. Rebuke to amendment, they may ſubmit: Scatter to confuſion, for they delight in miſchief, and it ſhall happen to them. Imprecations are of a dangerous conſequence, they are, I grant, rather to be feared then imitated: yet on the other ſide, I doubt not to affirm, that as our charity to man commands our prayers to God for the converſion of the weak,

and

and ſeduced enemies of the Church; ſo our zeal to the truth and glory of God, may warrant us to pray for the diſſipation of the wilful and malicious enemies thereof. The writings of the Prophets are full of theſe Imprecations. And although St *Auguſtine*, a miracle of underſtanding, ſuppoſes thoſe to be only propheſies of what ſhould come to paſs, then requeſts of what they deſired; yet his charity herein is rather to be commended, then his ſentence in all thoſe to be embraced. For how theſe words of *David* (*Be not merciful unto them who offend of malicious wickedneſs*) ſhould be reducible to the form of a Propheſie, is not ſo eaſily apprehended: Nor that St *Paul*, when he wiſhed, *I would that they which trouble you were cut off*; meant only with the ſword of excommunication, is not ſo eaſily believed, as ſome would have it. Patience in our own ſufferings, is Chriſtian

ſtian, but when God ſuffers, it is impious. God ſuffers when his Truth is perſecuted and martyred: when therefore wicked men ſhall meerly either out of fained ſcrupuloſity, as doth the Beaſt of the Reeds; or elſe out of envie, as doth the Bulls, or out of ignorance, as do Calves of the people; or elſe out of ambition, as do the men that delight in miſchief; when I ſay, wicked men upon no other ground but ſuch as theſe, ſhall with bloody brains invent, as did the Beaſts of the Reeds, and with bloody conſciences allow; and with a bloody Religion defend, as did the multitude of the Bulls, and with bloody affections advance, as did the Calves of the people, and with bloody hands execute, as did the men that delight in miſchief, ſuch ſacrilegious and bloody practiſes as theſe; then it is time for us to ſay, *Rebuke, O Lord*, &c.

FINIS.